

up for justice and fair treatment for all Americans.

During his life, César E. Chávez was committed to providing fair wages, better working conditions, decent housing, and quality education for all.

Mr. Chávez also served the United States proudly in the Navy during World War II.

His spirit and his vision are still alive today and I am determined to celebrate what he stood for and his great accomplishments.

Madam Speaker, today, I introduce legislation to rename the post office located at 2777 Logan Avenue in the Barrio Logan section of San Diego as the "César E. Chávez Post Office." This is the least we can do to honor such a great but humble man dedicated to justice. Please join me in giving Mr. Chávez his rightful place in American history.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TAXPAYER ABUSE AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION ACT: CONGRESS SHOULD NOT ALLOW BOUNTY HUNTERS TO ABUSE TAXPAYERS

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 29, 2007

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, last week I introduced H.R. 695, the Taxpayer Abuse and Harassment Prevention Act of 2007, along with Representatives STEVE ROTHMAN, RUSS CARNAHAN and 42 other original cosponsors. If enacted into law, this legislation would repeal the provision tacked onto the 2004 corporate tax bill (H.R. 4520, the so-called American Jobs Creation Act in the 108th Congress) that hands over the tax returns of millions of American taxpayers to private contractors to collect delinquent taxes, and allows them to keep 25 percent of their take as a commission for services rendered.

Three weeks ago, on January 9th, in her annual report to Congress the National Taxpayer Advocate identified the IRS' private debt collection initiative as one of the most serious problems facing taxpayers and called on Congress to repeal the IRS's authority to use private collection agencies to collect federal taxes. The Advocate's report illustrated why the IRS private tax collection program is a waste of taxpayer dollars, invites overly aggressive collection techniques and jeopardizes the financial privacy of American taxpayers:

The IRS's Private Debt Collection initiative is not cost efficient, adds unnecessary costs and burdens to taxpayers, diminishes the improved image of the IRS, and surrenders too many valuable components of our tax administration system. Therefore, Congress should repeal IRC §6306 and thereby terminate the Private Debt Collection initiative.

We must repeal this provision because it opens the door to taxpayer intimidation and abuse, practices that have been outlawed by Congress. This practice amounts to bounty-hunting—at taxpayer expense—by allowing collection agencies to harass those same American taxpayers, many of whom are guilty of nothing, with the incentive of collecting their commission as their primary motivation. Giving unaccountable outside bounty hunters unfettered access to Americans' personal financial data poses a risk that we just cannot afford.

What's more worrisome is the IRS' inability to oversee the work of these private debt collectors. A 1996 pilot program for private collection was so unsuccessful that a similar pilot program planned for 1997 was cancelled outright. The contractors used in the pilot programs regularly broke the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, did not protect the security of personal taxpayer information, and even then failed to bring in a net increase in revenue. An audit report of the pilot program found that, "contractors blatantly circumvented IRS policies and procedures even when security personnel identified inappropriate practices." In fact, the report found that contractors made hundreds of calls to taxpayers during times prohibited by the FDCPA, and that calls were even placed as early as 4:19 a.m.

While IRS employees are explicitly forbidden from being evaluated on the basis of revenue collected, the private collection scheme would actually link contractor pay to the amount of revenue collection. This policy encourages contractors to use aggressive collection techniques to boost their remuneration. Furthermore, the IRS is currently liable for damages to a taxpayer resulting from the misuse of confidential information by an IRS employee, but taxpayers will not be able to recover damages from the federal government where contractors are guilty of malfeasance.

The House had already expressed its will that this provision not become law when it approved by voice vote an amendment to the FY2005 Treasury Appropriations bill that prevented the expenditure of any federal funds for private collection of federal taxes. Unfortunately, the Treasury Appropriations bill never became law, and the House language was stripped out of the FY 2005 omnibus spending bill by the Republican leadership in the conference—behind closed doors, in the dead of night.

We must repeal this onerous provision. We must protect American taxpayers from intimidation and abuse. We must ensure that personal financial records are protected and remain private. Two decades ago this Congress passed the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act specifically to protect Americans from intimidation and abuse, but last year this Congress perpetrated an injustice by allowing these very abuses to go forward.

I urge my colleagues to join me in working with the IRS to find a more effective means of collecting delinquent tax debt collection and avoid this risky scheme altogether. Let's pass the Taxpayer Abuse and Harassment Prevention Act.

TRIBUTE TO HIS EXCELLENCY LAZAR ELENOVSKI

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 29, 2007

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, I would like to call to your attention to a man I am proud to recognize, His Excellency Lazar Elenovski, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Macedonia, on the occasion of his visit to the United States.

It is only fitting that he be honored in this, the permanent record of the greatest freely elected body on earth, for he has a long his-

tory of dedication and commitment to international relations.

Minister Elenovski was born in 1971 in Skopje, Macedonia, and went on to graduate from the Faculty of Economy at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University. A member of the New Social Democratic Party of Macedonia, a part of the coalition government, he was appointed Minister of Defense in August 2006.

Minister Elenovski has long been a great advocate for Atlanticism in Macedonia. He worked to promote and implement the Euro-Atlantic idea and values in Macedonian society in the early 1990s. This effort culminated in his founding of Young Europeans for Security (YES) in 1995.

He was also one of the founders of the Social Democratic Youth of Macedonia (SDYM), and served as its Secretary General from 1996–1999, and then as its president until 2001. He was a member of the Presidency of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia from 1997 until 2003. He is a signer of the Protocol for Cooperation between the SDYM and PASOK Youth in Athens in 2001.

Between 2001 and 2005, Minister Elenovski served as Secretary General of the Euro-Atlantic Club of Macedonia, and in late 2005, was elected President of the Euro-Atlantic Council of Macedonia, a member of the Atlantic Treaty Association. During this time he was also Deputy LEO of Public Transport in Skopje.

He has implemented many initiatives for the support of NATO and EU integration projects in his nation, for the civilization values of Atlanticism, and notably for the democratic development of Macedonia. In May of 2004, he initiated and served as a signatory of the Declaration for Euro-Atlantic Partnership and Cooperation between the Atlantic Associations of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia. He is also a founder of the Central and South Eastern European Security Forum-Balkan Mosaic.

Minister Elenovski is known as an advocate for regional cooperation and integration. Along with civil and local authorities, he has worked on many regional and international projects which strengthened regional cooperation, and improved the security and stability of the nation and region.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Minister Elenovski's friends, and me in recognizing the outstanding achievements of a true leader, the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Macedonia, Lazar Elenovski.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NIAGARA FALLS NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA ACT

HON. LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 29, 2007

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Act, which will provide Federal resources to preserve and promote one of America's greatest natural wonders.

Every time I make the long drive across my congressional district, I am reminded of how fortunate I am to represent a region with such a diverse geographic make-up. From the Ontario shoreline, to vast vineyards and apple orchards, to the waterfront on Lake Erie, Mother

Nature has bestowed some of her finest treasures upon western New York. But none are as recognized world-wide as Niagara Falls, which attracts more than 7 million visitors annually. The Niagara River Gorge is an exceptionally scenic corridor, carved by the movement of the falls beginning over 10,000 years ago. Federal recognition of this geological wonder and the Niagara frontier is long overdue.

The Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Act will provide Federal resources to help heighten national appreciation for the falls' natural splendor and the region's contributions to our Nation's history. The bill is critically important to the district I represent. With the steady decline in manufacturing, the western New York economy has become increasingly dependent on tourism. In addition to recognizing the falls in our Nation's development, the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Act will help revitalize and strengthen the local economy by creating a comprehensive strategy to attract tourists to the region.

Niagara Falls is a geological wonder that has been a world-renowned tourist destination for more than 200 years. Rich in natural and cultural resources, the Niagara falls area has significant historical associations with Native Americans, early European exploration, the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Underground Railroad. In addition, the falls have long been an important site for hydroelectric power and ancillary industries. Together, these elements have greatly contributed to the development of the United States and deserve Federal recognition as a national landmark.

A National Heritage Area designation will heighten appreciation for the region, better preserve its natural and historic resources, improve coordination among existing programs at the site, enhance the quality of life, and expand the economy of the Niagara region. The Niagara Falls National Heritage Area will be comprised of the area stretching from the western boundary of the town of Wheatfield to the mouth of the Niagara River, and from the river to Lake Ontario. It will also include the city of Niagara Falls, the villages of Youngstown and Lewiston, and all land and water lying within these boundaries. The Niagara Falls National Heritage Area will be managed by a Federal Commission for its first 5 years in existence before being turned over to a local management entity. This bill has widespread public support, and a Niagara Falls National Heritage Area has been endorsed by the National Park Service.

Madam Speaker, Niagara Falls has always been a source of pride for western New York. But the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Act will help to solidify its standing as something more: an engine for the revitalization and promotion of our region's natural, historic, and scenic resources to residents and visitors alike. I look forward to working toward passage of this important legislation.

A TRIBUTE TO ROBERT C.
DAVIDSON, JR.

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 29, 2007

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay special recognition to Robert C. David-

son, Jr. upon being named recipient of Morehouse College's Bennie Leadership Award for the year 2007.

Robert Davidson's long and distinguished career began in the late 1960s, when he began as a Management Consultant with the New York-based Cresap, McCormick and Paget. Robert later moved to Boston, where he cofounded and served as Vice President of the Urban National Corporation, a private venture capital company established with a commitment to increase industry's investment in minority-controlled businesses.

Mr. Davidson's entrepreneurial spirit continued as he served as Chief Executive Officer of Avant Garde Enterprises, and it later led him to develop and head his own management and consulting firm. In 1978, Robert formed Surface Protection Industries, Inc. (SPI) and served as its Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. Under his leadership, SPI developed into one of California's leading African-American-owned manufacturing companies.

Robert Davidson has a strong commitment to community involvement and voluntary service. He currently sits on the Board of Directors for the following organizations: Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia; Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. (NYSE); Broadway Federal Bank (NASDAQ); Fulcrum Venture Capital Corporation; Cedars-Sinai Medical Center; the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business Advisory Council; Art Center College of Design in Pasadena; the South Coast Air Quality Management District Brain Tumor and Air Pollution Foundation; and the Los Angeles Urban League.

Prior board affiliations include Children's Hospital of Los Angeles; Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce; Rebuild LA; Museum of Contemporary Art; Charles Drew University School of Medicine; Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena; Shaare Zedek Medical Center Jerusalem; Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra; Falcon Cable Community Ventures; the African/American Museum of Art; the Black-Jewish Economic Development Committee of Los Angeles; Big Brothers of Greater Los Angeles; the Weingart Center for the Homeless; and the Planning Commission for the City of Pasadena.

Mr. Davidson lives in Pasadena with his wife Faye and their three sons, Robert III, John Roderick, and Julian.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring an outstanding individual of California's 29th Congressional District, Robert C. Davidson, Jr. The entire community joins me in thanking Robert for his success and continued efforts toward making the 29th Congressional District a better place in which to live and work.

TRIBUTE TO THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PENNSYLVANIA FEDERATION OF SPORTSMEN'S CLUBS

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. CARNEY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 29, 2007

Mr. CARNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 75th anniversary of the PA Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs. The Federation is one of the oldest and largest conserva-

tion organizations in Pennsylvania. Since 1932, the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs has been the leading advocate of our outdoor heritage, wildlife habitat and environmental protection in the Commonwealth.

For three-quarters of a century this great organization has worked diligently to defend the rights of individuals under the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution, as well as ensure the rights of all citizens to a healthy environment. The Federation was the driving force behind the passage of the Nation's first environmental laws, including PA's Clean Streams Law in 1937.

Throughout its proud history, the Federation has been a strong partner in conservation with our State and Federal natural resource and wildlife management agencies, such as the PA Game Commission, the PA Fish and Boat Commission, and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. In cooperation with these public agencies, the Federation has helped to conserve precious wildlife habitat, protect clean water, and provide countless recreational opportunities for millions of American citizens.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the members of the PA Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, past and present, for their 75 years of distinguished service to the United States of America.

A WISE CHOICE FOR SPEAKER

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 29, 2007

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, no one who knew them both could ever deny the power of the relationship and marriage between Phil and Sala Burton. It brought together two people who cared deeply about America and believed strongly in progressive values and actions. As the enclosed article notes, Sala Burton saw these same values and talent in our new Speaker, NANCY PELOSI, many years ago. When Sala, seriously ill, asked NANCY PELOSI to run for her congressional seat, she was acting on the same values and trust that she and Phil brought to public life. Sala made a decision that changed the history of the House of Representatives and our country forever.

I would like to share the article with our colleagues:

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 3, 2007]

SALA'S CHOICE

NANCY PELOSI CARRIES ON A POWERFUL LEGACY

(By Harold Meyerson)

Sala Galant Lipschultz Burton made two critical decisions during her lifetime, the full meaning of which could not have been apparent to her at the time she made them. The first, in the early 1950s, was to marry a young lawyer and Democratic activist named Phil Burton, who was to become the single most important member of the House of Representatives in the '60s and '70s.

As a leader of the California Young Democrats and a rising force in San Francisco politics, the young Phil Burton had already won a reputation for his political brilliance—and for his explosive temper. Nobody worked harder for liberal causes. Nobody demanded more of his associates and staffers: If they